

Message Text

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73

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 DHA-02 EB-07 COME-00 AGR-05

AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-11 /061 W

----- 124487

R 041435Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8863

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2026

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: EAID, LE

SUBJ: VISIT BY MONSIGNOR HARTNETT, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC
RELIEF SERVICES

1. MONSIGNOR HARTNETT, ROME-BASED NEAR EAST REGIONAL
DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES (CRS), ACCOMPANIED BY
MRS. MCCANN OF THE CRS ROME STAFF, VISITED THE CHARGE
MARCH 3. THE MONSIGNOR HAD JUST FINISHED VISITING CRS PRO-
GRAMS IN NORTH YEMEN AND JAORDAN AND ARRIVED IN LEBANON
MARCH 1. BASED ON HIS ADMITTEDLY QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE
SITUATION HERE, DURING WHICH HE HAS AVOIDED CONTACT WITH
ANY GOL OFFICIALS UNTIL HE IS IN A POSITION TO MAKE A CON-
CRETE PROPOSAL, MONSIGNOR HARNETT INDICATED HE THOUGHT
CRS COULD HELP IN THE LOCAL SITUATION BY MOUNTING A MODEST,
SHORT-RUN PROGRAM, WHICH HE HOPED COULD BE ADMINISTERED
ON A NON-PARTISAN BASIS.

2. HE STATED AT THE OUTSET OF THE MEETING THAT HE WANTED TO
KNOW WHAT THIS EMBASSY'S PRESENT POLICY WAS TOWARD THE
U.S. PROVIDING TITLE II COMMODITIES TO PRIVATE VOLAGS FOR
PROGRAMS HERE, SINCE HE UNDERSTOOD THE EMBASSY HAD
ORIGINALLY RECOMMENDED AGAINST EMERGENCY FOOD AID TO
LEBANON. HE SAID CRS HAD ALREADY PURCHASED 200 MT
OF FLOUR AND 100 MT OF DRY MILK WITH ITS OWN FUNDS BUT
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THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MOUNT A PROGRAM TO REACH 100,000-

200,000 PEOPLE FOR 1-2 MONTHS WHICH WOULD REQUIRE
TITLE II INPUTS. NO DOLLAR FIGURE WAS MENTIONED.

3. IN HIS REPLY, THE CHARGE STRESSED THAT THIS EMBASSY
CONTINUED TO LOOK AT THE OVERALL SITUATION WITH AN OPEN
MIND. AS MANY FACTS CONCERNING THE EXTENT OF THE
DISASTE ARE REVEALED AND AS THE PLANS AND REQUESTS
OF THE GOL ARE FORMULATED, THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN
CLARIFYING ITS UNDERSTANDING AND MODIFYING ITS
ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATIONS. MONSIEUR HARNETT'S
DESIRES WILL BE REPORTED TO WASHINGTON AND PUT IN THE
CONTEXT OF POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON THROUGH
PRIVATE AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS. OUR MAIN EMPHASIS
IN THE FIELD OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON AT
THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, IS A POSSIBLE USG RESPONSE TO THE
APPEAL BY UN SECGEN WALDHEIM FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
A DOLS 50 MILLION UN PROGRAM TO BE COORDINATED BY
FORMER AMBASSADOR BUFFUM.

4. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, EMBASSY
HAS ALREADY RECOMMENDED FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION
FOR RENEWING TITLE I PL 480 ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON,
PERHAPS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UN APPEAL. ON THE
OTHER HAND, A MODEST GESTURE IN THE TITLE II AREA
COULD PROVE HELPFUL IN INCREASING IMMEDIATE
ASSISTANCE TO THE HOMELESS AND THE DESTITUTE, WHILE
AT THE SAME TIME MAKING AVAILABLE ADDITIONAL RECOGNIZED
EXPERTISE ON THE GROUND IN LEBANON--WHICH SEEMS
SO OFTEN TO BE LACKING. CARE WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN OF
WJUPQUM# ASSISTANCE AMONG INTERESTED

PRIVATE AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS SO AS TO AVOID THE AP-
PEARANCE OF PARTIALITY IN LEBANON'S CHRISTIAN-MOSLEM
MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL CONTEXT.
LAMBRAKIS

NOTE BY OC/T: # AS RECEIVED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, RELIEF (ASSISTANCE), VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, PL 480 TITLE 1, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT02026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760083-0515
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760397/aaaadhax.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT BY MONSIGNOR HARTNETT, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES
TAGS: EAID, LE, US, CRS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006